

Press Conference

Re: Gulf Coast Renaissance Corporation REACH Scholarship  
Announcement

Monday, Dec. 15, 2008, 2 p.m.

2:00 p.m. At the podium: Governor Haley Barbour, Anthony  
Topazi, Sergeant Craig Necaise,

• **Governor Barbour welcomes the press and other attendees.**

Makes opening, broad remarks about the Gulf Coast Renaissance Corporation, and the importance of its mission to provide affordable workforce housing to the three Gulf Coast counties still recovering from Hurricane Katrina. Governor makes the general announcement that the scholarships are being awarded to 267 recipients for \$2.7 million.

“The Gulf Coast Renaissance Corporation’s REACH Mississippi program is focused on opportunity. Employers are given the opportunity to invest in their best assets, their employees. Those employees, in turn, are offered the opportunity to become homeowners, often for the first time, and Mississippi has the opportunity to answer the nationwide issue of affordable housing on a state level in a progressive, economically sound manner that benefits not only our businesses and industries, but also our citizens.”

• **Governor Barbour introduces Renaissance Chairman and Mississippi Power President and Chief Executive Officer Anthony Topazi.**

• Topazi thanks the Governor for his support, which is so critical to making today’s announcement possible. He also recognizes the Mississippi Development Authority and the Mississippi Housing Corp. representatives, as well as Mississippi Gulf Coast Housing Director Gerald Blessey, for their combined efforts to

make affordable housing a priority in the rebuilding on the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

Topazi gives a more defined explanation of REACH, its funding (including \$2.4 million from the Governor's Mississippi Hurricane Recovery Fund and the Jackson County Civic Agency \$350,000 contributions through the McCormick Tribune Foundation's Hurricane Katrina Relief Campaign) and how the \$2.7 million will change the lives of the 267 recipients. He explains the reasoning of awarding the money to the public-sector employees. Topazi illustrates the point by recognizing the school teacher and Harrison County Sheriff's Department Sergeant Craig Necaise and briefly stating what the scholarship will mean for this public-sector employees.

- Necaise to make brief remarks. Harrison County Sheriff's Patrol sergeant whose family is realizing their dream of home ownership through this program.
- **Governor makes concluding remarks, focusing on the human-interest portion of the story that these funds contributed to the Renaissance Corporation are an investment in the state of Mississippi's promising future.**
- **Governor opens floor to Q&A from the press.**
- Press conference concludes